

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Staff Senate

Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 16, 1992
College Center - Veterinary Medicine

SENATORS PRESENT: Carolyn Alls, Pat Ballard, Larry Blankenship, Janis Brown, Clara Cox, Patrick Donohoe, Kathy Eschenmann, Spencer Foster, Julie Hancock, Linda Haney, Jane Harrison, Barbara Hise, Doug Irvin, Doug Jones, Eileen Keeney, Sherilyn McConnell, Margie Murray, Pamela Orcutt, Diane Patty, Fred Phillips, Haywood Pyle, Bill Ranck, Peggy Rasnick, Kathy Reynolds, John Rudd, Widget Shannon, Buddy Shaver, Michele Shepherd, Charlie Stott, John Strauss, Keith Tignor, Sarah Wheeler, Deb Williams

ALTERNATES IN ATTENDANCE: Patty Hall for Larry Blankenship, Wyatt Sasser for Charles Paige, Bruce Harper, and Darrell Sheppard

FACULTY SENATE LIAISON: Marilyn Norstedt

GUESTS: Garnett Linkous - Proposal Review and Negotiations
Charles W. Steger - Speaker

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by President McConnell, who welcomed guests, liaisons, senators, and alternates.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President McConnell announced that the deadline for the Management Systems Laboratories (MSL) Responsiveness Award has been extended to February 7. President McConnell thanked Barbara Harris, Adelene Kirby, Virginia Tech police, the Christiansburg High School National Honor Society, and senators for their assistance in providing funds, food, and gifts for two families at Christmas.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the December 19, 1991, Staff Senate meeting were amended to include a note from Personnel Services about the EEO/AA hiring guidelines. The minutes were approved as amended.

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORTS

HUMAN RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL SERVICES COMMITTEE/ISSUES--Senator Stott, chair, reported that the committee is in the process of identifying issues for consideration by the Senate. He said the issues have been divided into two broad categories and that subcommittees have been established to address the categories: Alternate Senator Harper will head the Quality of Work Subcommittee, which will look at such issues as health and safety, hiring, new employee practices, and effective

management, while Senator Shepherd will head the Benefits Subcommittee, which will look at such issues as retirement, educational opportunities and assistance, pay for performance, and training and career development.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL SERVICES COMMITTEE/STAFF ASSOCIATIONS-- Senator Murray, chair, reported that committee members have been assigned responsibility for area staff associations and that the committee will be discussing the length of terms of staff senators. Senator Murray said that the terms need to coincide with university committee/commission appointments. She indicated that the Senate would need to give staff associations guidelines on elections of senators.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE--Senator Cox, chair, reported that the meeting dates of Staff Senate have been sent to SPECTRUM for inclusion in the calendar and that the agenda for each Senate meeting will be printed in SPECTRUM on the day of the meeting. She said that the committee will work on a joint Faculty Senate/Staff Senate column in SPECTRUM. She noted the importance of SPECTRUM in keeping staff informed about staff affairs and other topics of interest. The committee has identified several areas agriculture barns, dining services, and grounds--that face problems receiving SPECTRUM and has found volunteers who will see that two of these areas receive copies, but volunteers are needed for dining services. In highlighting the January meeting of the Classified Staff Affairs Committee, she said that Wyatt Sasser reported on the Common Health Wellness Program and asked him to provide information for the Staff Senate.

Alternate Senator Sasser added that the program will involve filling out a questionnaire and submission of a \$5 fee. The program will be custom-tailored to individual needs. The state is funding the position of the coordinator. Alternate Senator Sasser said he will be traveling to Richmond for training on promoting the program. He said the program may be up and running by March or April.

COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS AND NOMINATIONS--Senator Phillips, chair, said the next meeting is scheduled for January 22, 1992, with no news to report at this time.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS SUBCOMMITTEE--Senator Tignor, chair, reported that the committee has worked diligently for the last two weeks and expects completion of the constitution and by-laws before the February meeting. He said that all Senators should review the material and be prepared to amend/approve at that time.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON LONG-RANGE REDUCTIONS--Alternate Senator Hall for Senator Blankenship, chair, reported that the committee will meet January 21, 1992.

GUEST SPEAKER

Dr. Charles W. Steger, Acting Vice President for Public Service and Dean of the College of Architecture and Urban Studies, addressed the Senate. He described the university's Public Service Division and gave examples of its work in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Division provides

information, educational programs, and technical assistance to communities, governmental agencies, business and industry, and other organizations to assist these constituents with their policy, program, and organizational development efforts. One aspect of the Division, Continuing Education, is comprised of approximately 400 programs, which do many things for the Commonwealth. Dr. Steger said that many people have faced problems gaining access to Virginia Tech's expertise. Consequently, a hotline, 231-TECH, has been installed, and the response has been enormous. The Division now has computerized tracking of all projects and currently has 375 requests for help across the state. One main focus of the Public Service Division, he said, is to increase the economic development of Virginia, with Virginia Tech as the catalyst of change. With Virginia relying extensively on defense spending, the state's economy is more fragile in reduction times. The Division will look at possibilities of restructuring the state's economy away from defense spending in a spring forum to be held in the Tidewater Region. Dr. Steger also talked about staff involvement in the university's public service mission, noting that several members of the staff, under funding by the Division, conducted a workshop for high school newspaper and yearbook editors, writers, and photographers in Salem.

Following his address, Dr. Steger answered questions, where the point was made that Virginia needs increased volunteer efforts to solve problems, such as within schools and rescue squads. The point was also made, in response to a question, that the university has no funding at this time for much-needed supervisory training workshops.

OLD BUSINESS

RELEASE TIME FOR STAFF--Senator Cox reported that the administration recognized the validity of staff suggestions for changing the guidelines for staff participation in university governance, incorporated the changes, and has officially released a memo detailing the guidelines to deans, directors, department heads, and staff governmental leaders.

GUIDELINES FOR PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE--Senator Stott reported that an article in SPECTRUM by Ann Spencer helped clarify the nomination guidelines. He said a letter will be sent to current members of the selection committee apprising them of Staff Senate's concerns with the guidelines, with the anticipation that changes will be made in next year's guidelines for nominations. Senator Cox is the Staff Senate representative on the selection committee, which will hold its initial meeting on January 21, 1992.

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT PARKING--President McConnell reported receiving some responses, pro and con. The decision was made to extend the time to respond to President McConnell until February 11. Senator Ballard said the issue has been tabled on the Parking Committee at present.

NEW BUSINESS

PROFESSIONAL OFFICE STAFF APPLICANT POOL--Senator Foster reported that the pool was designed to refer applicants for jobs in one to two days

when possible. Some departments use the pool while others do not. The option is up to the department whether to advertise through normal channels or use the pool. Applicants are accepted continually, and the need exists for applicants to be more specific on the forms. Personnel solicits feedback or suggestions. Senator Foster said the clerical pool is a fairly new process, and Personnel wants to improve it. He said the most cumbersome problems seem to be the quantity of rollovers, which is particularly prevalent in wage positions.

STAFF DIVERSITY PLAN--President McConnell has asked that Linda Woodard and Cornell Morton supply copies of the plan before the next Executive Committee meeting. She said that Woodard and Morton will meet with the Executive Committee to discuss the plan.

PART-TIME SALARY BENEFITS--Senator Ranck had asked that this item be placed on the agenda because he questioned why half-time salaried employees could not receive pro-rated benefits. He said he has learned that the state code requires employees to be full-time to receive many benefits. While annual and sick leave is pro-rated, there are no provisions for life insurance or retirement. Senator Murray suggested that Doug Martin be asked to address the Senate on this issue.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN--Senator Stott reported that the university is currently in the early planning stage for its next capital campaign. He noted that the list of goals for the campaign does not include benefits for staff even though they will be targeted for contributions. At this point, he said, no final decisions have been made or goals set, and he encouraged suggestions that would allow staff to realize some of the benefits of the campaign, such as the establishment of a fund for staff development.

COMMUNICATION WITH LEGISLATORS--Vice President Orcutt asked senators to push their respective areas to encourage legislators to listen to their constituents. Senator Orcutt and Senator Shepherd urged senators to take advantage of January 20, Lobby Day, to travel to Richmond.

OTHER

Senator Rasnick mentioned there is a student representative on the Board of Visitors and asked if the Senate feels it should have a staff representative, even if that representative is non-voting. It was pointed out that all appointments to the Board of Visitors are made by the governor. President McConnell agreed to obtain additional information about the issue.

Senator Williams urged the committee secretaries to send committee minutes electronically to the Senate secretary, (Hisebs/vm2) so the secretary can forward the minutes via main frame to all senators with userids, thus saving paper and mailing time.

Senator Tignor reported that the CSAC-drafted constitution states Staff Senators will serve for three years. His committee will distribute a survey to learn which senators were elected for one-year and which for two-year terms. He said that one-third of the Senate body should be elected yearly.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Barbara Hise
Secretary